

K-12 SCHOOL QUARANTINE

Introduction

Central District Health recognizes the value of in-person learning and the challenge of balancing the risks of COVID-19 and educational, social, and emotional supports. While COVID-19 is circulating in the United States, measures need to be taken in order to ensure that schools operate in a way that minimizes risk to students, staff, and the community.

The following are Central District Health's recommendations for quarantining school-aged children who have been exposed to a person who has tested positive, or is diagnosed, with COVID-19 (case).

The most effective way to reduce ongoing transmission in school settings is to quarantine close contacts (those within 6 feet for more than a cumulative 15 minutes over a 24-hour period) for 10-14 days. This is CDH's primary recommendation.

Instructional Areas (e.g. standard classroom-like environment with teacher in front of the room and students are seated)

If both the case and the contact were wearing masks 1) that cover the nose and mouth and 2) were worn consistently during the exposure period, then:

- The case must isolate at home as recommended by public health.
- The contact may attend in-person classes, but must monitor themselves closely for COVID-19 symptoms during the two weeks after exposure. If they develop symptoms, they should stay home and contact a healthcare provider.
 - **Contacts are permitted to attend in-person classes. Outside of the school instructional setting these individuals are required to quarantine. Participation in sports, extracurricular activities, childcare, community events, parties/gatherings and other similar activities are prohibited.**

Non-instructional Areas (e.g. before or after school, sports, extra-curricular activities, cafeteria)

- All contacts are required to quarantine.

Policy Considerations

- School reporting of close contacts of a case should continue
- School notification to students, families, and staff of exposure should continue
- All contacts should not bus or ride share to school
- All contacts should maintain physical distancing and wear a face covering

CDH recommends remaining extra vigilant in monitoring health and staying home if feeling ill, especially if under recommended quarantine.

CDH recommends that schools provide clear communication to their communities about the risks and benefits associated with having exposed teachers or staff participate in the school setting.

What is Quarantine?

Quarantine refers to the practice of separating individuals who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 to determine whether they develop symptoms or test positive for the disease. Quarantine also reduces the risk of transmission if an individual is later found to have COVID19. Quarantine for COVID-19 should last for a period of 7-14 days after the exposure has ended. Ideally, each quarantined individual should be quarantined in a single location.

Quarantine includes not leaving the quarantine location to attend activities, school, childcare, work, or visiting the community or having visitors at the location of quarantine. The exception is to seek medical care.

Additional Resources

[How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering](#) | CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>

[When to Quarantine](#) | CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>